29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

114 men, I improvised extra meals of powerful doughnuts to dull the edges of their appetites. Chipman, O'Neill, the geologist, and Johansen, the biologist, always provided good fare, although Johansen's enthusiasm for pure science often restricted us to two meals a day. But it was for Cox, the junior topographer, that we reserved our greatest respect. He startled us one day by placing on the table a splendid cake covered with rich chocolate icing. Our eyes gleamed with anticipation; it was the first real cake we had seen for many months, and each man grabbed simultaneously for the dish. O'Neill won; two quick cuts of the knife landed a huge slice in front of him. Then a roar of laughter shook the room, for the body of the cake was solid cold cornmeal mush left over from our breakfast.

Our first task after the *Alaska* left was to erect a [132] house for the approaching winter. September with its shortening days had come upon us, and snow might fall at any time, snow that would not disappear before the following June. Building in the Arctic is by no means as difficult as in the Antarctic. There is little or no vegetation in the latter region, and in consequence no soil, so that a winter house offers no comfort unless it has double or triple walls of close-fitting boards lined with tar paper, felt, or other non-conducting material. But the tundrous soil of the Arctic provides the finest kind of sheathing for a house. All that is needed is a wooden framework strong enough to